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PRAGMATISM AND ITS CRITICS. By Addison W. Moore. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1910. Pp. xi, 283.

Professor Moore's study of pragmatism is characterized by a moderate temper and a clear style. Its distinctive features, as the preface suggests, are the sketch of the historical antecedents of pragmatism, the emphasis on the central "*rôle* of the conception of evolution in the development of pragmatism," and the insistence on the social character of experience. The book is made up of five chapters embodying a relatively untechnical exposition of pragmatism (originally given as 'semi-popular lectures'), followed by a collection of papers, already published in different journals, each in response to some critic of pragmatism. One hopes that Professor Moore will sometime give us a constructive treatise subordinating criticism to a discussion of pragmatism as complete system.

The comment on the book which follows is written from the standpoint of personalistic absolutism, and therefore concerns itself chiefly with the issue between pragmatism and this form of absolutism. Moore's consideration of the opposition of pragmatism to mere intellectualism and to thorough-going realism must, however, be noticed. (I.) In its effort to bring about the 'logical regeneration of voluntarism' pragmatism achieves its most important success. Its emphasis on the 'doctrine of the real efficiency of thought' (p. 103) is its central teaching. Dr. Moore admirably states the pragmatist's contention, that pure thinking is no end in itself, though he does not prove that pragmatism is the only system reconcilable with this view. (II.) So far as pure realism is concerned, Moore certainly shows that it denies the essential efficiency of thought. Realism of this type is a defence of the thesis that "*thinking makes no 'essential' difference to the things thought of or about,*" and that ideas make only "the difference of the *addition* of thought" (pp. 89-90). Pragmatism, on the other hand, holds that the addition of thought makes an 'essential alteration in the situation,' that thought is, indeed, 'a part of the total process of an efficient desire and effort to effect a change in experienced values' (p. 93; cf. p. 108). It should be added that Moore, in spite of his reiterated statement of this grave difference between realism and pragmatism, none the less recognizes a basal likeness of the one to the other. "The pragmatist," he says, "agrees with the realist that

... at any given time some of the world (or experience) may be 'independent' of knowledge in the sense that it is not then 'being known' . . ." (p. 108). This makes of pragmatism a dualistic doctrine. Moore, to be sure (in reply to Creighton), argues that pragmatism is not dualistic in that it teaches the temporal continuity of non-thinking with thinking reality (p. 160); but the qualitative duality remains in spite of the temporal continuity.

(III.) With the pragmatist's opposition to absolutism, this review, as has already been suggested, will deal in greater detail. Moore's criticisms reduce to five which will be discussed in an order different from his own. (1) The first to be considered is introduced by Moore in reply to the critics who object to pragmatism as subjective. Professor Moore has no trouble in showing that contemporary pragmatists (notably Dr. Dewey and those of his school) regard experience from a social, not from an individualist standpoint, that they take for granted 'the perfectly objective and social character of consciousness' (p. 223) and assume that "consciousness is somehow born of a thoroughly social and objective world" (p. 229). In this assertion of the social character of consciousness (so Moore argues), the pragmatist makes absolutism unnecessary; and if, on the other hand (he continues), consciousness were not social, only a single self, and no Absolute, could be proved to exist (pp. 222-223). Students of Fichte and Royce do not need to be reminded of the answer which the absolutist will make to this criticism. He will claim that the pragmatist too naïvely and "confidingly took this conception of the perfectly objective and social character of consciousness at its full face value" (p. 223). For such an interrelated society of finite selves is only possible, he will contend, on the supposition that the finite selves are all parts of the one, absolute self.

(2) A criticism more frequently repeated saddles upon absolutism the difficulties inherent in any 'copy-theory' of knowledge,—the doctrine that "ideas can only algebraically represent or 'mean' or 'point at' a world of reality 'beyond' " (p. 109). This criticism, it should be noted, identifies absolutism with the Platonic theory of 'universal and immutable Ideas' existing distinct from the individual consciousness. The absolutist is well within his rights when he objects to this identification. Conceived after Lutoslawski's fashion, the Platonic theory so far from being absolutist is a pluralistic spiritualism which sub-

ordinates ideas to souls; and according to the traditional interpretation, which sets the ideas as ultimate realities over against the souls, Platonism is at best one form of absolutism among others. But Moore uses 'Platonic Ideas' almost as a synonym for 'the Absolute,' and even attributes to Professor Royce the conception of the Absolute as 'system of ideas.' He nowhere takes account of the personalistic view of the Absolute as concrete thinking and willing self, of the finite selves as genuine parts of the absolute self, and of knowing as direct not mediate—a sharing, not an imitation or copy.

(3) In the third place, the pragmatist finds fault with the absolutist for conceiving reality as purely cognitive. Royce, to be sure,—as Moore notes,—attempts to introduce purpose into the Absolute (p. 63), but the effort is foredoomed to failure, since "to preserve the changeless perfection of reality, purpose can have for its content only an algebraic correspondence with the absolute system of ideas which makes it even more vacuous than Plato's 'contemplation'" (p. 69). This criticism recurs again and again. Absolutism is, in truth, equivalent for Moore with intellectualism (*cf.* pp. 23, 44, *et al.*). Evidently this objection is based in part on the assumptions already challenged, that the Absolute is a system of Platonic ideas and that absolutism involves a copy-theory of knowledge, but it is still more deeply rooted in the pragmatist's opposition to the absolutist doctrine of the permanence of reality.

(4) To this, the strongest reaction of pragmatism against absolutism, we must now turn our attention. All the foregoing criticisms are indeed outgrowths from this. The absolutist (whether his Absolute be impersonal or personal, system of ideas or absolute self) holds that there exists eternal and immutable reality; the pragmatist teaches that reality is purely in the making. Absolutist doctrine, so the pragmatist believes, tells against the reality of change; "pragmatism . . . is a crusade to release change from the limbo of 'appearances' and reality from the stocks of a 'changeless unity'" (p. 176).

We have reached at length the crucial point of divergence between the two systems. Unquestionably the absolutist believes that there exists reality other than that of the purely human experience—even other than that of the aggregate of human experiences. But he may appeal, if he will, from the Bradleian Absolute for whom change is mere appearance, and from the

Platonic Absolute, 'a whole of the static, geometrical type,' to the Hegelian or Roycean Absolute for whom change is real, although subordinately real. The absolute self, as thus conceived, though *more than* temporal, is *also* temporal. And the development of human individuals constitutes a reality which (to the human consciousness, shared though transcended by the absolute self) is constantly changing. In a word, this personalistic form of absolutism challenges the pragmatist's claim to exclusive rights in the conceptions of change and of progress.

(5) The last of these criticisms, the pragmatist's objection to the absolutist conception of truth, is a corollary to the criticism just outlined. For the absolutist, truth is the agreement of individual experience with reality; for the personalistic absolutist, from whose standpoint this review is written, this means that truth is the correspondence of the individual with the absolute experience,—of the part, with the whole. The pragmatist objects "that there is no connection between the absolutist's general definition of truth and error and the standard actually employed in testing any particular judgment" (p. 131), or, that "there appears no necessary connection between the absolute system and the determination of truth and error in any given case." To this statement, modified a little, I think that the absolutist must agree. In other words, I believe that the absolutist is logically certain of truth only when he asserts his own existence and that of the absolute self. Of course he admits with Baldwin (quoted on p. 189) that the most convenient 'test' of the truth of an idea is its agreement with a purpose of which it is a constituent part. The pragmatist calls this agreement 'truth,' the absolutist regards it as an indication of the truth which he cannot define otherwise than as 'the fulfillment of an absolute purpose.' And he claims that this conception, empty as it is in its bearing on the special case, has a unique value as an essential factor of the general view of the universe as more-than-human reality.

A word may be added concerning the supposed advantage of the pragmatist conception of truth. Moore admits that the older pragmatist definition of true ideas as ideas which work "was an easy mark for the critic, who lost no time in reminding us that false ideas seem to be as industrious as true ones." Accordingly, he modifies the original definition so that it reads: ideas "which work in the way they set out to work . . . are true" (p. 87).

To the form of this statement it must be objected that only persons, not 'ideas,' can 'set out to work' or 'purpose' anything. But, waiving this point, one cannot fail to see that this pragmatist conception of the true idea, as that which fulfills a purpose, is definite only in so far as it is individualistic. For it is practically no more difficult to describe the purpose of the Absolute in a given case than to estimate the relation of a given idea to the 'total objective situation.' Either the pragmatist's conception, like the absolutist's, must have no 'necessary connection' with a given case, or the pragmatist must consent to be called a subjectivist.

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EPICURUS. By A. E. Taylor. London: Constable & Co., 1911. Pp. viii, 122.

This little book is one of a series (Philosophies Ancient and Modern) to which Professor Taylor has already contributed books on Plato and Hobbes. It is delightful reading. The main characteristics of Epicurus and his school are admirably sketched,—their 'moral invalidism' due to the indigestion to which the Epicurean circle seem to have been martyrs (he might have made more of this point when speaking of Lucretius), their likeness to the early Christians, their secularism as opposed to the religious spirit of both the Academy and the Porch, their sad want of public spirit. In short, it is a study full of interesting information, salted with ingenious conjecture, and refreshingly free from pedantry.

To have escaped being dull when writing about an ancient philosopher is much; but it would have been still better if Professor Taylor could have combined impartiality with liveliness. Though he is not unfair when discussing the general spirit of the school, his attitude as regards its systematic philosophy is too much that of counsel for the prosecution. No one would now claim for Epicurus great merit as an original thinker. But can it be true that the founder of a sect, which for about five centuries influenced large numbers of highly civilized people, including Lucretius and Lucian, was a man quite destitute of real intellectual ability? That is what Professor Taylor would have us believe. He speaks of him as a 'charlatan,' and of his philosophy as 'a clumsy amalgam of